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ACTION ARA-01

INFO LOG-00 AMAD-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 EB-01 INRE-00 INR-01
 ADS-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 PM-01 P-01 SP-01 SS-01
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P 061934Z FEB 92
FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6631
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMCONSUL PORTO ALEGRE
AMCONSUL RECIFE
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PM
USIA WASHDC 7983

RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BRASILIA 01380

E.O.12356: DECL: OADR

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TAGS: PREL, BR, MOPS, VE
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL COMMENTS ON
 VENEZUELAN COUP ATTEMPT

REFS: (A) BRASILIA 1325
 (B) BRASILIA 1166
 (C) BRASILIA 937

SUMMARY

1. (S) ACCORDING TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: NORMAN M BOUTON
DATE/CASE ID: 22 JUL 2008 200503656

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[REDACTED] THE GOB HAD NOT EXPECTED THE FEBRUARY 3 COUP ATTEMPT IN VENEZUELA ALTHOUGH IT HAD NOTICED SIGNS OF INCREASED SOCIAL UNREST IN THE UNIVERSITIES OVER THE PAST HALF YEAR.

[REDACTED]

2. (C) EMPHASIZING THAT THERE IS NO BORDER DISPUTE BETWEEN BRAZIL AND VENEZUELA, [REDACTED] THE VENEZUELAN MILITARY MAY HAVE BEEN DISTURBED BY PRESIDENT PEREZ' BORDER POLICY VIS-A-VIS COLOMBIA AND GUYANA. FRICTION CAUSED BY THE PRESENCE OF BRAZILIAN GARIMPEIROS ALONG VENEZUELA'S BORDER WITH BRAZIL DID NOT FIGURE PROMINENTLY IN THE PLOTTERS DECISIONS.

[REDACTED] THE ATTEMPTED COUP IS A GOOD CASE STUDY TO UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEMS THAT LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES FACE. IMF ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMS MAY HAVE TO BE BETTER TAILORED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES OF INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES IN THE

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REGION. END SUMMARY.

ROOTS OF THE CRISIS

3. (C) FOREIGN MINISTRY [REDACTED] TOLD DEPUTY POL COUNS FEBRUARY 5 THAT THE ATTEMPTED COUP IN VENEZUELA REFLECTS FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS IN VENEZUELAN SOCIETY AND INDICATES THAT THE PRESENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC SYSTEM IN VENEZUELA IS "EXHAUSTED". REFERRING TO THE DISTURBANCES IN VENEZUELA IN 1989 SHORTLY AFTER PEREZ TOOK OFFICE, [REDACTED] THAT VENEZUELA IS CHARACTERIZED BY GENERAL POLITICAL INSTABILITY. HE SAID THAT, WHILE BRAZIL HAD NOT EXPECTED A COUP ATTEMPT AT THIS TIME, THERE HAD BEEN INCREASED SOCIAL AGITATION IN VENEZUELAN UNIVERSITIES IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS AND AN ATTEMPT ON PEREZ' LIFE. [REDACTED] THAT THE GOVERNOR OF THE VENEZUELAN PROVINCE OF ZULIA, WHO WAS BRIEFLY HELD BY THE COUP PLOTTERS, REPORTED AFTER HIS RELEASE THAT MANY STUDENTS HAD DEMONSTRATED IN THE STREETS IN SUPPORT OF THE COUP PERPETRATORS.

PROXIMATE CAUSES

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4. (C) DEPUTY POL COUNS [REDACTED] WHAT THE PROXIMATE CAUSES OF THE COUP MIGHT HAVE BEEN AND WHETHER THE RECENT INCIDENTS ALONG VENEZUELA'S BORDER WITH BRAZIL MIGHT HAVE BEEN A FACTOR LEADING TO THE COUP. [REDACTED] THAT VENEZUELA HAS BORDER PROBLEMS WITH ALL ITS NEIGHBORS "EXCEPT BRAZIL." ALTHOUGH THERE ARE INCIDENTS ON THE BORDER BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES,
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THERE IS NO BORDER ISSUE PER SE -- I.E., THERE IS NO QUESTION AS TO WHERE THE BORDER SHOULD BE. THE BORDER ISSUE BETWEEN BRAZIL AND VENEZUELA WAS SETTLED OVER A CENTURY AGO IN THE TREATY OF 1859.

5. (C) [REDACTED] THAT ELEMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH BRAZILIAN GOLD MINERS OPERATING ALONG THE BORDER WITH VENEZUELA ARE TRYING TO CREATE A CLIMATE OF MISUNDERSTANDING AND CONFUSION IN THE AREA. HOWEVER, THE GOB IS WORKING IN CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT TO BETTER DEMARCATHE THE BORDER.

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P 061934Z FEB 92
FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

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USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PM
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S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 02 BRASILIA 01380

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SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL COMMENTS ON
CROSS BORDER TRADE BETWEEN VENEZUELA AND THE STATE OF
RORAIMA IS SIGNIFICANT, AND BRAZIL WANTS TO DEVELOP THE
FRONTIER REGION IN COOPERATION WITH VENEZUELA. IT IS
WORKING TO ESTABLISH JOINT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS
ALONG THIS BORDER SIMILAR TO THOSE IT HAS WITH COLOMBIA
AND PERU AND ON BRAZIL'S SOUTHEASTERN BORDER.

6. (C) ON THE OTHER HAND, ELEMENTS IN VENEZUELA'S
MILITARY MIGHT HAVE BEEN UNHAPPY WITH PEREZ' POLICY OF
SEEKING TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH ALL ITS NEIGHBORS,
PARTICULARLY COLOMBIA AND GUYANA WITH WHICH THERE ARE
BORDER DIFFERENCES. PERHAPS SOME MILITARY FACTION HAD
FELT THAT PEREZ' BORDER POLICY WAS NOT SUFFICIENTLY
NATIONALISTIC. THE ISSUE OF THE BRAZILIAN GARIMPEIROS
IN VENEZUELA (REFS B AND C) COULD HAVE PROVOKED A
NEGATIVE REACTION AMONG SOME FACTIONS OF THE VENEZUELAN
MILITARY AND THEREBY CONTRIBUTED TO THE COUP. HOWEVER,
THIS ISSUE WAS CERTAINLY NOT A LEADING FACTOR IN THE
VENEZUELAN OFFICERS' DECISION TO TRY TO OVERTHROW PEREZ.

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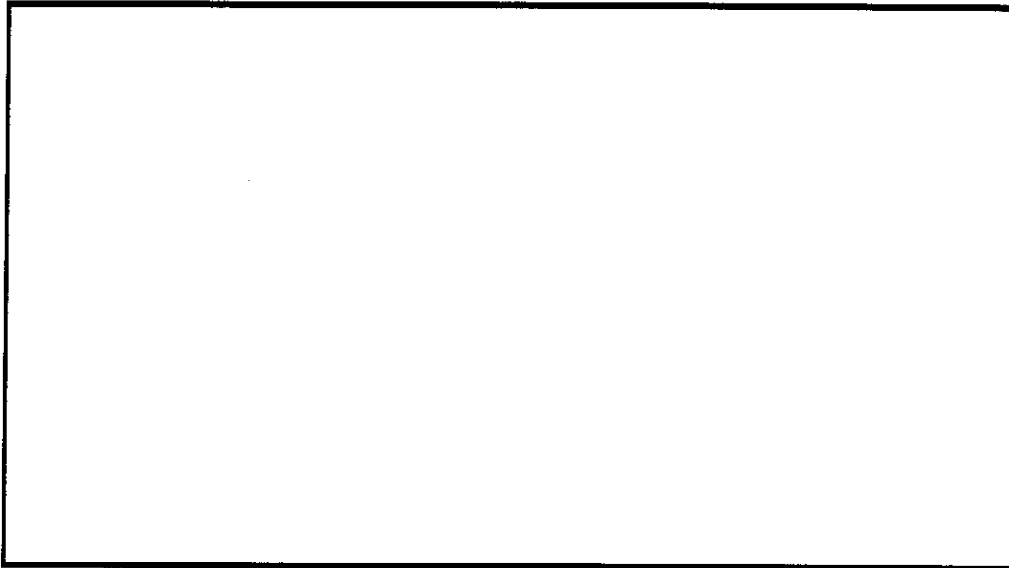
A CASE STUDY?

7. (C) [REDACTED] THAT, OVER THE COMING WEEKS, THE
GOB WILL CONDUCT A THOROUGH ANALYSIS OF WHAT IS
HAPPENING IN VENEZUELA TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE
SITUATION. HOWEVER, THE COUP ATTEMPT PROVIDES AN
OPPORTUNITY FOR REFLECTION ABOUT THE FUTURE OF
DEMOCRACY IN THE REGION. THE CRISIS IN VENEZUELA MAY
PROVIDE A GOOD CASE STUDY FOR TRYING TO UNDERSTAND THE
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PROBLEMS WHICH LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES FACE. PERHAPS
THE "NEO-LIBERAL" MODEL ON WHICH THE IMF BASES ITS
ANALYSES MAY NOT BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE SITUATION IN
LATIN AMERICA BECAUSE IT DOES NOT TAKE SUFFICIENT
ACCOUNT OF THE POTENTIALLY EXPLOSIVE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT
IN THE REGION. IMF ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMS MAY BE
TOO DIFFICULT FOR SOME OF THE COUNTRIES IN THE REGION
TO ABSORB. THE IMF MAY NEED TO TAILOR ITS PROGRAMS
MORE CAREFULLY TO SPECIFIC SITUATIONS AND LOCAL
CIRCUMSTANCES.

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